

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3346

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 570

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK

SUBJ: OBSTACLES TO SIMLA PROCESS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 0500 B. ISLAMABAD 0246

SUMMARY: THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL IMPEDIMENTS TO THE RESUMPTION OF THE SIMLA PROCESS. JOINT SECRETARY CHIB AT THE MEA FOR THE FIRST TIME DIRECTLY LINKED INDIAN RELUCTANCE TO PROCEED ON THE CIVIL AIR TALKS TO THE BANGLADESH ISSUE. ALTHOUGH PAKISTANI COMMERCIAL PURCHASES FROM INDIA MIGHT MITIGATE THE SITUATION, THE INDICATIONS FOR THE MOMENT ARE FOR CONTINUED STATEMENT IN THE SIMLA PROCESS.

1. IN SPEECHES AND INTERVIEWS DURING THE PAST WEEKS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER Y. B. CHAVAN SAID PUBLICLY  
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AND PRIVATELY THAT THERE ARE PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES

TO THE RESUMPTION OF THE SIMLA PROCESS. HE PLACED THE RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PAKISTANIS, BUT CONTENDED INDIA REMAINED COMMITTED TO THE SIMLA PROCESS AND WOULD PATIENTLY AWAIT ITS RESUMPTION.

2. IN THE RAJYA SBHA DEBATE ON JANUARY 8 CHAVAN SAID THAT INDIA WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE POSITIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SIMLA SPIRIT, EVEN IF PAKISTAN WAS SLOW TO RESPOND. THE MINISTER WONDERED WHETHER PAKISTAN'S ATTITUDE REFLECTED FORCE OF HABIT, OR WAS DELIBERATE. THE SPEECHES DELIVERED BY MR BHUTTO IN SRI LANKA SHOWED HE STILL HAD SOME RESERVATIONS. BUT, CHAVAN ADDED, WE HAVE PATIENCE. PAKISTAN AND INDIA ARE SO NEAR TO EACH OTHER THAT WE HAVE NO WAY BUT TO COOPERATE AND BE FRIENDS.

3. IN AN INTERVIEW CONDUCTED ON DECEMBER 5, BUT NOT PUBLISHED UNTIL THE END OF DECEMBER, CHAVAN WAS MORE EXPLICIT. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ON INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS THE MINISTER SAID: THE PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION HAS SLOWED DOWN BECAUSE THE LEADERSHIP IN PAKISTAN DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE QUITE MADE UP ITS MIND ABOUT GIVING UP THE PAST POLICIES OF CONFRONTATION. THERE SEEMS TO BE A DICHOTOMY IN THEIR THINKING; ON THE ONE HAND, PAKISTAN TELLS THIRD COUNTRIES THAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN NORMALISING RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND IN ESTABLISHING DURABLE PEACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT; ON THE OTHER, THEY TALK THE LANGUAGE OF CONFRONTATION. IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE HAS BEEN INCESSANT PROPAGANDA AGAINST INDIA IN WHICH ALL SORTS OF FALSE ALLEGATIONS ARE MADE. WE HAVE GIVEN NO CAUSE EITHER BY WORD OR DEED TO WARRANT SUCH ALLEGATIONS. ON THE CONTRARY, WE HAVE SCRUPULOUSLY FOLLOWED THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT REGARDING RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. WE HAVE ALSO SINCERELY PURSUED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH PAKISTAN IN 1974 PERTAINING TO TRAVEL, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRADE, ETC. THOUGH PAKISTAN'S RESPONSE HAS NOT BEEN QUITE THE SAME, WE SHALL CON-

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TINUE TO PURSUE THESE CONSTRUCTIVE POLICIES.

4. POLCOUNSELOR ON JANUARY 9 REVIEWED INDO-PAK RELATIONS WITH MEA JOINT SECRETARY (PAK-AFGHAN) CHIB (WHO WILL LEAVE THIS DESK AT THE END OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FOR CAIRO AS INDIAN AMBASSADOR). CHIB ECHOED OBSERVATIONS BY MRS GANDHI ON INDO-PAK RELATIONS AND CHAVAN (BUT IN SOFTER TONE) DESCRIBED REF B. CHIB

WAS FOR THE FIRST TIME HIMSELF EXPLICIT IN ASSERTING THAT INDIAN RELUCTANCE TO MOVE AHEAD ON CIVIL AVIATION TALKS WAS DUE TO BANGLADESH ISSUE. HE SAID THE PAKS WERE THE ONES WHO WERE VIOLATING AGREEMENT ON RADIO PROPAGANDA WITH ACCUSATIONS OF INDIAN BUILDUP ON BANGLADESH BORDER. THE PAK DEFENSE THAT THEY WERE ONLY REPEATING WESTERN PRESS STORIES CARRIED NO WEIGHT WITH GOI.

5. CHIB AGAIN REVIEWED PROBLEMS INVOLVED ON SALAL DAM ISSUE, TRADE, AND GENERAL QUESTIONS OF TRUST BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES (BUT DID NOT MENTION ARMS POLICY--HE ALMOST NEVER DOES). HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT IF GOP AGREED TO PURCHASE A SUBSTANTIAL VOLUME OF GOODS FROM THE GOI WHEN INDIAN TRADE DELEGATION WAS IN PAKISTAN THIS WEEK, COULD HELP CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVEMENT OF "ATMOSPHERE" WHICH COULD THEN LEAD TO DISCUSSIONS ON OTHER ISSUES AND EVENTUALLY TO EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS. CHIB SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT GOI ARGUMENT ON NOT REOPENING DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS MIGHT NOT SEEM PERSUASIVE TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, BUT IT WAS INTRINSIC TO NATURE OF INDO-PAK RELATIONS.

6. CHIB SAID THAT GOI REPLY TO PAK NOTE ON CIVIL AVIATION HAD BEEN DELAYED BY ABSENCE OF SENIOR GOI LEADERS AT PARTY FUNCTIONS IN CHANDIGARH AT THE END OF 1975, BUT WOULD GO FORWARD SHORTLY. CHAVAN'S REPLY TO AZIZ AHMED LETTER ON CHANDIGARH SPEECHES REJECTING AZIZ AHMED'S COMPLAINTS, HOWEVER, HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT.

7. COMMENT: CHIB SPOKE WITH CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF RESIGNATION WHILE DEFENDING GOI POSITIONS. HIS GENERAL APPROACH, HOWEVER, AND THE MUCH SHARPER TONE  
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OF MRS GANDHI'S REMARKS ON PAKISTAN MADE TO SENATOR MCGOVERN AND CHAVAN'S PUBLIC POSITION DO NOT SUGGEST MUCH PROSPECT FOR PROGRESS ON INDO-PAK RELATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. BANGLADESH, BHUTTO'S OWN DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, AND MRS GANDHI'S OWN INTERNAL CONCERNS ALL INDICATE CONTINUED STALEMATE, AT LEAST FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1976.  
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